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1973/10/24

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Auth: MD 972520

By JVF WFA 9/25/97

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TELEGRAM

CONTROL: 6 6 6 8Q
RECD: 23 OCT, 10:35PM

R 240030Z OCT 73
FM USLO PEKING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 881
BT
SECRET PEKING 1261

NODIS/CHEROKEE

EYES ONLY FOR SECRETARY KISSINGER FROM DAVID BRUCE

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PFOR CH
SUBJ: TAIWAN IN US-PRC RELATIONS

1. I AM SURE THAT YOU HAVE BEEN STRUCK, AS WE HAVE, BY TENG HSIAO-P'ING'S ALLEGED REMARKS TO A JAPANESE DIETMAN IN CONNECTION WITH YOUR PEKING VISIT (TOKYO 13425) TO THE EFFECT THAT NO IMPROVEMENT IN US-PRC RELATIONS BEYOND THE PRESENT LEVEL WILL BE POSSIBLE UNLESS THE PRESIDENT SEVERS POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH TAIWAN AND RECOGNIZES THE PRC AS THE SOLE LEGITIMATE GOVERNMENT OF CHINA.

2. WE HERE ARE NOT CLEAR AS TO WHAT INTERPRETATION SHOULD BE GIVEN TO TENG'S WORDS, IF INDEED HE ACTUALLY MADE THEM. CERTAINLY WE HAVE NO REASON AT PRESENT TO BELIEVE THAT THE PATTERN OF US-PRC TRADE AND CULTURAL RELATIONS, WHICH HAS BEEN DEVELOPING SINCE FEBRUARY 1972, WILL BE INTERRUPTED (THOUGH FOR TECHNICAL REASONS BEYOND OUR KEN THE NUMBER OF BILATERAL CULTURAL EXCHANGES HAS FALLEN OFF SINCE LAST SUMMER). MOREOVER, OUR RESPECTIVE LIAISON OFFICES ARE NOW GOING CONCERNS. HOWEVER, REGARDLESS OF WHAT TENG SAID, WE CAN SEE SEVERAL REASONS WHY THE CHINESE MIGHT CONSIDER THAT FORWARD MOTION ON TAIWAN IS NECESSARY AT THIS TIME IN ORDER TO KEEP THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH THE U.S. ON TRACK.

3. THE FIRST OF THESE RELATES TO THE 10TH CCP PARTY CONGRESS AND THE PUBLIC POSITION ON RELATIONS WITH THE US AND THE USSR WHICH THE CHINESE HAVE NOW TAKEN. AS EPITOMIZED BY CHOU EN-LAI'S AND WANG HUNG-WEN'S REPORTS TO THE PARTY CONGRESS, PARTICULARLY THE LATTER, THE U.S. HAS BEEN EQUATED MORE EVENLY WITH THE SOVIET UNION AS A FORCE WHICH IN STRICTLY ORTHODOX MAOIST TERMS IS SOMEHOW ANTI-THETICAL TO CHINA, AND ONE WHICH MUST BE WATCHED CAREFULLY. THIS IS NOT TOO SURPRISING IN VIEW OF THE

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SEMI-RELIGIOUS NATURE OF A PARTY CONGRESS WHEN ORTHODOXY PREVAILS AND THE FACT THAT ONLY FOUR YEARS AGO AT THE 9TH PARTY CONGRESS THE U.S. HEADED THE LIST OF CHINESE ENEMIES. STILL, THERE MAY BE ELEMENTS AT WORK WITHIN THE CCP HIERARCHY WHICH OBLIGED CHOU TO RAISE THE LEVEL OF ANTI-U.S. CRITICISM AND BE MORE EVEN-HANDED VIS-A-VIS THE U.S. AND THE USSR. THUS, EVEN THOUGH THE CHINESE HAVE MADE IT EVIDENT IN EDITORIAL COMMENT THAT IT IS THE USSR AND NOT THE U.S. WHICH CONSTITUTES THE REAL THREAT, SOME OF THE TOP LEADERS MAY CONSIDER SOME MOVEMENT BY THE U.S. ON TAIWAN IS NECESSARY TO DEMONSTRATE (AS CHOU PUT IT) THAT PRC-US RELATIONS HAVE IMPROVED "TO SOME EXTENT", AND THAT FURTHER IMPROVEMENT IS POSSIBLE ON THIS BASIS.

4. IN ADDITION, THE CHINESE AND OURSELVES CURRENTLY HAPPEN TO BE ON OPPOSITE SIDES OF THE FENCE ON A NUMBER OF MAJOR INTERNATIONAL ISSUES, NOTABLY CAMBODIA, KOREA, U.S.-USSR DETENTE, AND THE MIDDLE EAST. ACCUSATIONS AGAINST THE TWO SUPER-POWERS FOR HEGEMONICAL ASPIRATIONS AND FOR COLLUSION AGAINST REVOLUTIONARY STRUGGLES ARE COMMONPLACE IN CHINESE MEDIA, AND ARE APT TO APPEAR MORE STRIDENTLY IN CONNECTION WITH THE MIDDLE EAST CEASE-FIRE. AS YOU KNOW, CH'IAO KUAN-HUA IN HIS U.N. SPEECH OPENLY CRITICIZED THE U.S.-SOVIET SUMMIT AGREEMENTS. UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES IT MAY BE MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE CHINESE TO SUGGEST TO THEIR PEOPLE THAT THE SAME KIND OF U.S.-PRC RELATIONS WHICH PREVAILED FOLLOWING THE PRESIDENT'S VISIT STILL EXIST TODAY REGARDLESS OF THESE CONSIDERABLE DIFFERENCES. ONCE AGAIN, U.S. MOVEMENT ON THE ISSUE OF TAIWAN, A POPULAR ONE TO THE CHINESE PEOPLE, WOULD HELP TO PUT MATTERS BACK IN A BETTER PERSPECTIVE.

5. FINALLY, THERE IS THE QUESTION OF THE PRC CAMPAIGN AGAINST TAIWAN ITSELF. WE DOUBT THAT THE CHINESE REALLY BELIEVE THIS CAMPAIGN IS GOING WELL DESPITE THEIR BEST EFFORTS TO WIN TAIWANESE OPINION IN FAVOR OF UNIFICATION. IN REAL TERMS TAIWAN STILL EXISTS OUTSIDE PRC CONTROL, AND AS THINGS NOW STAND CAN CONTINUE TO DO SO INDEFINITELY DESPITE THE LOSS OF POLITICAL RECOGNITION AND REPRESENTATION IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS. TAIWAN'S ECONOMIC GROWTH IS MOST IMPRESSIVE AND IT IS APPARENTLY QUITE STABLE POLITICALLY. THUS, THE CHINESE MAY REASON THAT UNLESS THE U.S. ACTS SOON IN SOME WAY TO CONVINCE LEADING PERSONALITIES ON TAIWAN THAT A CONTINUED SEPARATE STATUS FOR TAIWAN CANNOT BE SUSTAINED, "LIBERATION" BY POLITICAL MEANS MAY BE EXTREMELY DIFFICULT TO ACHIEVE.

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6. I HAVE NO POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS TO MAKE REGARDING THE TAIWAN QUESTION, AND AM SENDING THESE OBSERVATIONS ALONG ONLY TO ALERT YOU IN CASE TAIWAN SHOULD PROVE TO BE A MATTER OF CONSIDERABLE CHINESE CONCERN DURING YOUR TRIP.

BRUCE

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